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UNCLAS QUITO 001643

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SUSPECTED FARC MILITANTS DEPORTED

11. (U) Summary: Three suspected FARC militants, captured in a Quito clinic on July 11, were deported to Colombia on July

12. President Palacio telephoned a grateful President Uribe on July 12 to inform him of the capture. One of the suspects is believed to have led the FARC attack on the Teteye military base on June 25, near the Ecuadorian border, which resulted in numerous casualties. End Summary.

12. (U) The Ecuadorian police captured three suspected FARC militants on July 11 at DAME, a Quito clinic, where one of the suspects, Juan Carlos Vera Cedeno, was being treated for bullet wounds. The others were identified as Delio Tobar Ortiz and Ana Anton Canchingue; all three claimed to be agriculturists. Two Ecuadorians, Cristobal Colon Vera Calderon and Efren Argemiro Barret Vera, were also detained and are believed to have helped transport the Colombians to Quito from Lago Agrio, near the Colombian border. The Ecuadorian police continue to attempt to confirm the detainees' actual identities. Police spokesman Juan Zapata said the arrest was the result of an anonymous phone tip.

13. (U) President Palacio telephoned President Uribe in Spain on July 12 to inform him of the detention of the suspected FARC militants. Uribe, pleased by the news, claimed the three participated in the June 25 attack on the Teteye military base in Puerto Asis, Putumayo, on Ecuador's border. This attack caused the largest loss of GOC troops in 2005; 19 soldiers and 3 civilians were reportedly killed.

14. (U) The director of the clinic, Narcisa Valdivieso, said Vera arrived at the clinic on July 2 in a Lago Agrio Hospital ambulance. Vera was admitted with bullet wounds to his leg and arm. According to police, the clinic did not report Vera's admission, in spite of Ecuadorian law stating that all bullet wound victims must be reported to the judicial police.

15. (U) The three Colombians were deported on July 12 for not having proper documents, violating migration laws. Police took the detainees to Tulcan, on the Colombian border, in a police helicopter the evening of July 12, and later transferred them to the Ipiiales airport, then to Bogota.

Comment

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16. (SBU) The GOE action and Palacio's telephone conversation with Uribe is the strongest signal yet of the Palacio government's resolve to oppose actively a FARC combatant presence here.

HERBERT